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plantations as casuals, and a number of them did so intermittently, returning to the village to sleep.

The excess of boys over adolescent girls is explained by the fact that many of the girls were living with their prospective relatives-in-law in other villages, while the brides of the boys wearing the *upi* remained with their own people till after the *watawutʃ*.

One man has four wives, one has three, and five have two. One of these is a boy still wearing the *upi*, whose 'wives'—they are spoken of as such although the marriage rites have not been completed—do not yet live in the village, but pay short visits only.

Leaving out the 25 boys wearing the *upi*, and 4 men who sleep with them in the *tobār*, there are 107 individuals (72 adults and 35 children) living in 27 huts. The majority of huts have 3 or 4 inhabitants. The largest number sleeping, habitually, in the same hut is 7, which happens in 3 cases. One hut has a solitary occupant, an old widow, whose children are all dead.

THE DAILY ROUND

The village day begins at sunrise, with a leisurely stroll, during which frequent halts are made to enjoy the morning sun. It is not often that we wake to rain; that comes generally later in the day. The women take a briefer stroll, return home, and begin to rake together the ashes of the fire, probably still hot from having smouldered through the night. Soon the native Mission teacher blows the conch-shell which is the signal for Mass, and those who feel so inclined make their way to the church. (The church is beside the road, hidden by trees from the village, hence it does not appear in the plan. The villagers had just finished its construction when I came to live among them.) On their return, the women uncover the ovens in which taro has meanwhile been roasting, or they may boil some instead, or, if there is any over from yesterday, it may be eaten cold, together with any bits of fish or other relish that may be available. The men come along presently, the children are called up, and every one eats, but not a large meal. If the village is by the sea, some families will take their meal on to the beach and eat it round a fire kindled there. Then the women collect the scraps and call the pigs, who come on hearing their names. All now sit about for awhile, gossiping and making arrangements for the day.

The women presently pick up their knives and packs (made of

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slings of banana-fibre with a base of the heavy spathes of the areca-palm) and set off for the taro gardens, or they may tie round their waists the little baskets which they use to catch fish in the rock-pools or to store the shell-fish they collect from the reef at low tide. Almost every day a small party goes off on a bartering expedition, to meet the women from some other village with goods for exchange. The more energetic of the men will be flourishing bush-knives or fishing-rods; one may seize a spear and announce his intention of going to hunt wild pig, to the huge delight of all the dogs in the village, who signify their approval in the usual canine fashion, and there is no peace in the village till he has disappeared with them into the bush. A party may be told off to work on the government road in order to keep it in sufficiently good condition to avoid a scolding from the A.D.O. on his next visit. Eventually, most people go off somewhere, either to work or to laze, unless there is a house being built or a canoe being finished, in which case some of the men will set to work on it, in rather desultory fashion. The boys wearing the *upi* depart in a gang on some ploy of their own, the girls have either gone with their mothers or are left to look after the younger children, and usually one or two adults also remain in the village, having chosen not to work to-day. They do not like prolonged concentration on anything, and if I ask somebody, especially a young man, what he is going to do to-day, I shall very likely get the answer: 'Nothing, I worked yesterday.' There would seem really to be some justification for the universal complaint of the older men that the young men nowadays are lazy! The women do not bring back from the taro garden enough provender for more than a day or two at a time, so they cannot take as many 'days off' as their menfolk do. The very few really industrious families have probably built themselves a shelter of banana leaves beside their taro patch, and will not come near the village for days together. Those who remain in the village spend a good part of the day in sleep. Women with small babies, or minding those old enough to be left by their mothers, sit about on the back verandah or on prostrate logs, fondling the infants. For a time, in the early afternoon, the village is quiet.

In course of time the women come back with their baskets of shell-fish or their loads of taro or firewood, carried on their backs as we carry a rucksack. The little girls go off to the water-pools in the bush and return with the family's water-supply—for all purposes - in a dozen or so cleaned-out coco-nut shells

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poses—in a dozen or so cleaned-out coco-nut shells. The men come in from the reef, dangling strings of fish, if they have been lucky, or from the bush with a 'possum or two on a pole over their shoulders. Smoke begins to rise from every hut, in preparation for the main meal of the day. This consists for the most part of taro, but it is essential to have a 'relish' of fish, shell-fish, or 'possum, or, in the rare event of a hunter having been successful, a piece of wild pig, if the animal is not required to be kept alive for a forthcoming feast. But either the pigs are very wary, or, which is more likely, the hunter has given less attention to his quarry than to his assignation, for it is not often that he brings home any spoil.

The meal disposed of, the sound of the conch-shell calls the village to evening service. By the time it is over, the sun will have set. There is no twilight in these latitudes, darkness falling a very short time after the sun has disappeared. Fires provide the only illumination, and soon appear dotted about the village, with groups sitting round them chatting and playing with the children. In spite of what may have seemed an uneventful day, they always have plenty to talk about, and they sometimes tease one another unmercifully. If a dance is going on, any one who wishes joins in, and, if the occasion is a ceremonial one, and is sufficiently important, every one, children as well as adults, stays up all night, some always keeping the dance going while others stop to rest, to eat, or to make love, returning to the ranks of the dancers as and when they feel inclined.

If nothing is toward, the village settles down for the night very early, unless there is a moon, when it will resound with gossip and laughter for a long time. It is considered silly to go to bed while the moon shines. Once when I excused myself for leaving the assembled company on the ground that I was sleepy, they laughed, and said: 'This is not the time to go to bed. By and by, when the moon is gone, then you can sleep.'

Thus runs the course of an ordinary day in the life of a Bougainville village. In order to ascertain how the natives spent their time, individually, I kept for a while a daily record of certain of those who lived nearest to me, not, of course, in great detail, but noting what they were doing for the major part of each day. The records vary, naturally, with the character of the individual. Some are much more public-spirited than others, and take a prominent part in most village activities, other arrange their days to suit their own

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512 pleasure. The diary of at least one young man reads 'Lounged about the place' for the greater part of the time. I give here a few typical examples which will serve to show what the natives do with themselves at times when no special ceremonial or other activities are in progress.

A week from the record of Sobak, an elderly man

[283] *May 11.* Sat around on his verandah and on mine, making string for a fishline and chatting.

May 12. Split a quantity of sago-palm leaves and prepared them for making thatch for his hut, which has remained unfinished since the move from Gomen.

May 13. Went to do a day's work in the new taro garden.

May 14. Went to the nearest plantation, some 5 miles off, to sell copra, and was away all day.

May 15. Stayed about the village doing nothing in particular.

May 16. Worked at the taro garden.

[252] *May 17.* Made ceremonial pudding for his wife to take to Tabut for a feast which she was going to attend.

A week from the record of Matēv, an elderly woman

May 31. Went to Tarongen with other women to barter with the women from Saposa.

[23 482] *June 1.* Went with some other women to Baniu with a young pig to be brought up there because the food is more plentiful. She carried the pig on her back in a pack. Stayed there the night.

June 2. Came back from Baniu. Fetched taro for the evening meal.

June 3. Worked all day in the taro garden.

[415] *June 4.* Stayed in the village, spent most of the day cleaning the meat out of a coco-nut shell to make a new water-bottle.

June 5. Went to Tarongen to barter with the Saposa women.

June 6. Worked on the government road.

A week from the record of Tahol, young woman with a suckling infant

May 22. Sat around on her verandah and on mine, playing with her baby.

May 23. Went to the reef to gather shell-fish, leaving her baby with another woman.

May 24. About the place most of the day, towards evening went to fetch some bananas from Gomen.

May 25. Brought over some things from her old hut at Gomen, swept round the hut in which she lives at Kurtatchi, and cut away some bush.

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May 26. About the place, playing with her baby.
May 27. Went to barter with other women at Tarongen, taking the baby with her.
May 28. Worked in the new taro garden.

The records of the girls are similar to those of the women, they search for shell-fish on the reef, or work in the taro garden, or look after some one's baby, with intervals of doing nothing in particular. The boys spend most of their time fishing, or hunting 'possum, or just playing in the bush, or they may help an older man to shape a dug-out canoe.

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RECKONING OF TIME

The past of these people is enshrined for them in their numerous myths of origin, handed down from one generation to another, and called *wasisio wa kāna*, 'stories of long ago'. They are concerned with the doings of culture heroes such as Morena, who instituted their clans, and taught them the arts of life, as described in Chapter II. Tales are also told of successful raids led by great fighting men, who are remembered by name for about two generations back, generally given with the comment: 'They used to eat man.' The era before the white man began to count as a factor in native life (some forty years ago) is sometimes referred to as 'the time of fighting'. The present is 'the time of the white man'.

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As regards anything more definite than this, it is practically impossible to obtain any real information. The idea of reckoning an interval seems completely foreign to them. When I tried to find out any such thing as how long taro takes to ripen, or how long ago a certain man died, the majority of people would merely gaze at me in puzzled silence, no matter in what form I couched my queries. My most intelligent informant once said, in discussing these matters: 'We people do not know how tō count time. We think in our bellies, that's all.' They take up a plant to find how near the taro patch is to being ready for use, they hold ceremonies when they think they have enough food available. A messenger, carrying a branch of areca-nuts, is sent round to the villages that are expected to attend it, and leavēs a nut at each, as an indication that it is time to start. In days of old, this signal was also used as a request to join in a fight, either in defence or attack. If they wish to make an appointment to meet at the end of a designated period, say for purposes of barter, one party to the agreement will give

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137 tree, also known generally as 'bush banana', of which the native name is *wirtsun*; the liquid contained in this is not good for drinking. Its trunk is black, much thicker, and consists of a single stem only. Neither *oban* nor *wirtsun* produces edible fruit, except for parrots. [324] The leaves of the former, but not the latter, are frequently used to cover cooking-pots in which taro, &c., is being boiled.

273 656 No fermented drink of any sort is manufactured, and fortunately the natives have no access to European intoxicants, traders and planters being forbidden by the Government to supply them with beer or whisky, on pain of heavy penalties. Their comments on the behaviour of drunken white folk are not flattering.

MEALS AND MANNERS

264 Two meals a day are generally prepared, one in the morning, before setting out for the day's activities, and one at dusk, after returning from the taro garden, the bush, or the fishing grounds. There is much impatience if food is not immediately forthcoming when wanted. '*Io to met a bios!*' is the exact equivalent of our 'I am dying of hunger!'

512 264 262 252 They begin their day at sunrise, but they do not immediately eat their meal. They will sit or stroll about in the sun, enjoying its warmth before it rises high enough to become uncomfortably hot. At their leisure the women prepare some taro, either by putting some on to boil or by uncovering the oven where it has been cooking slowly all night. Fish are often eaten cold, having been cooked the day before and put aside wrapped up in leaves, or they may be heated on the embers. A typical meal which I shared with them at this time of day consisted of boiled taro, a quantity of small shell-fish, boiled, the water in which these had been cooked, and two kinds of bananas, one boiled and the other roasted on hot stones.

512 264 After taking their time over this meal they disperse to their several devices, taking with them some cold taro in a coco-nut-leaf basket, to eat at intervals during the day or during rest intervals en route if they are going a journey. Any taro still remaining will be put into a similar basket and hung up in the rafters of the hut, where any member of the household can help himself whenever he feels inclined.

The second meal of the day is considered the principal one. The women set about preparing it as soon as they come back from

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the taro garden with their loads, or from the reef with their little baskets of shell-fish. They begin by fetching firewood from the bush; huge loads are carried on their backs by means of slings of banana fibre hung from both shoulders after the manner of a rucksack. The small girls must help in this work, each according to her carrying capacity; they must also bring water. The meal does not differ greatly from that taken in the morning, except that more is eaten. Its main dish is invariably taro, either boiled or roasted, sometimes supplemented by yams, sweet-potato, or green leaves, or bread-fruit when in season. For the much needed 'relish' there will be fish, or shell-fish, or perhaps opossum, if any have been caught during the day.

Meals may be taken either inside or outside the hut, but are most frequently eaten on the women's verandah. They are shared by all the occupants of the hut, without rule of precedence, men and women eating together, and are times of pleasant chat and laughter, especially when the family sits at leisure after their hunger has been satisfied and discusses what is to be done that day, or what has been done, if the day is over. A man and his two wives, who usually occupy adjacent huts, will often share their meal on the verandah of one of them, with the children of both in great evidence. The adolescent girls eat with their parents, and the smaller fry hover about, scrambling on and off the verandah, getting such portions of food as their elders hand over to them. But the family circle is not complete, for the boys wearing the *upi* may not join it. They come to the door at the men's side of the house to have their food handed out to them, then they must take it away and eat it on the verandah of their *tobar*, or where they please, so long as they avoid the proximity of the women. It will be remembered also that persons standing to each other in the relationship of *nagus*, *watʃitʃio*, and *nunen* may not eat in one another's presence (see Chap. II), and that if a woman eats in the presence of her daughter's husband she must do so behind her hand.

Utensils used in the preparation and consumption of food are simple and few. Nowadays an occasional enamel saucepan, and perhaps a cup and a plate or two, will be seen in the villages, brought in by some returned plantation labourer. But most families do their cooking with the aid of native pots, of which they will possess at least two or three of different sizes. For